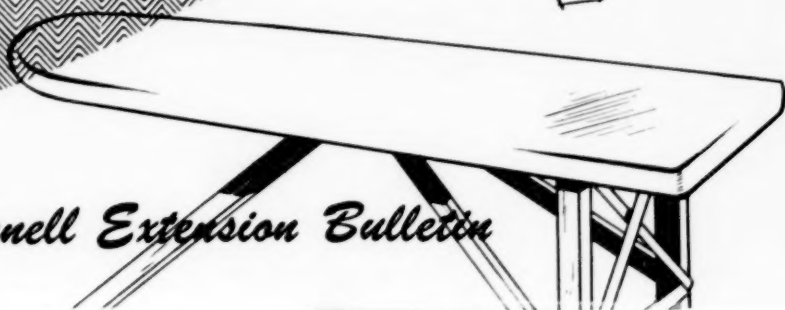
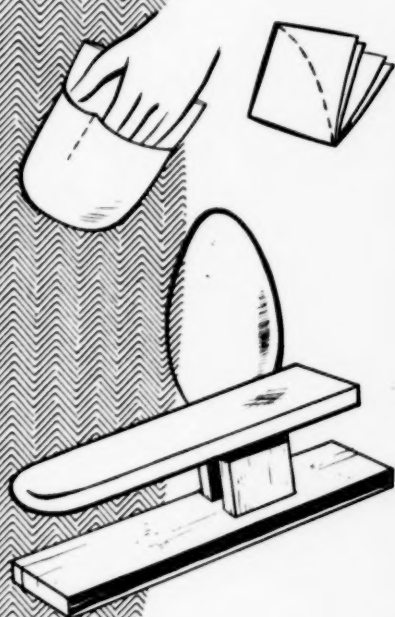


Dressing Equipment

MILDRED CARNEY



Cornell Extension Bulletin

Reprinted January 1957

A publication of the
New York State College of Home Economics,
a unit of the State University of New York,
at Cornell University

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Pressing Equipment

MILDRED CARNEY

THE KINDS of pressing equipment needed in your home depend upon the amount of pressing you do, the amount of sewing you do, and the amount of storage space you have. You may get along with a board, iron, and pressing cloth. Or you may require the whole gamut of equipment from steam iron to velvet pressing board. Whatever your needs, good workmanship calls for good equipment.

This bulletin has three purposes: to acquaint you with the many pieces of equipment which can be bought or made, to guide you in buying, and to instruct you in making pressing equipment.

Kinds of Equipment

An Ironing Board

An ironing board should be substantial, smooth, and steady, with a level, hard foundation made of metal or well-seasoned, non-warping wood. The board should be light in weight and easy to handle. The correct height depends on the height of the homemaker. The board should be low enough for easy use of force from the shoulder and high enough to prevent tiresome bending.

An old-fashioned folding sewing table makes a useful pressing board. It has wider space than the average ironing board and is low enough to let you sit down while you work. Such a table may be placed on rollers and made easily movable. It is particularly convenient in the sewing area. Be sure to pad and cover the table as recommended for the ironing board.

Padding

Padding should be soft but firm and thick enough to give the surface some spring. Pads may be bought which are resilient and do not pack down with use.

Pads can be made of old blankets, quilted cotton padding, flannelette, outing flannel, or cotton felt sold at tailors' supply houses.

Whether ready-made or homemade, the pad should be stretched tightly over the top of the board so that the surface is smooth with no seams, folds, or wrinkles.

The cover

The cover for the board should be lintless and free from starch or other dressing. Best fabrics are unbleached muslin or sailcloth. On the market now are burn-resistant covers; some of these, however, tend to scorch. Covers with tapes for tying are desirable. With or without tapes, the cover should be stretched tightly over the padding on the board and tacked to the board underneath.

An Iron

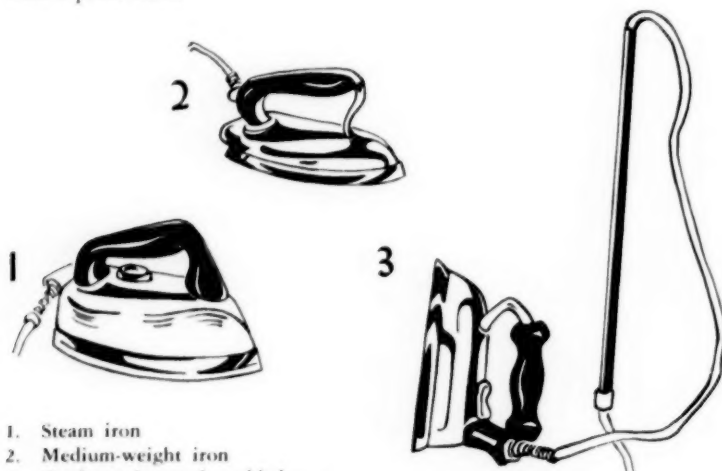
An iron should have heat control, with the indicator so placed that it is easy to see and to adjust; a heat-resistant handle, shaped to fit the hand and spaced far enough from the iron to protect the hand from heat; a back or side rest; power rating of at least 1000 watts for fast heating.

An iron of medium weight—about 4 pounds—is adequate for pressing.

With the iron you may want an attachment to keep the cord out of the way (saves time and temper) and a tin or asbestos pad to rest the iron on during pressing.

A steam iron

A steam iron gives off steam as it presses and may make the use of pressing cloths unnecessary for some fabrics and some purposes. On woolens and heavy weight fabrics where more steam is needed and the movement of the iron is slower, it is advisable to use a lightweight press cloth to prevent shine and scorch. Some fabrics which might water spot may be protected with a press cloth.



1. Steam iron
2. Medium-weight iron
3. Cord attachment for added convenience

Pressing Cloths

Pressing cloths bought on the market are usually chemically treated and suitable for use with any fabric. Cloths are available in two weights—one for heavy and medium-weight fabrics, one for light and medium-weight fabrics. Follow the manufacturer's directions for use and care.



On the market also is a chemically treated rayon fabric that looks like paper, is transparent when wet, and provides good protection for synthetic and other materials during pressing.

It is not necessary, however, to buy pressing cloths. Your odds-and-ends box may furnish all you need. In general, observe the following:

For lightweight garments

Any fine-textured fabric

Cheesecloth, either single or double, lightly dampened

To obtain the right amount of moisture, dampen the cheesecloth, wring it out thoroughly, and press it lightly with a hot iron.

Tissue paper, dampened slightly with a sponge

Use for light pressing on the right side of silks or rayons.

For medium-weight garments

Muslin, washed and boiled to remove all starch and dressing.

Parchment paper

This has the advantage of being lintless and transparent but it also has the disadvantage of scorching and tearing when wet.

For heavy-weight garments (such as winter-weight coats and suits)

Canvas

Woolen cloths

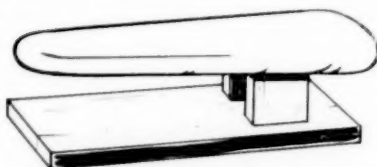
These are excellent for picking up the nap of a garment and removing shine. To make a woolen pressing cloth, use a piece that is all wool, colorfast, 15 by 24 inches, seamless, and a piece of cotton of the same size from which all dressing has been removed. Stitch the two pieces together along the 15-inch side on one end only.

To use: Wet the cotton fabric, lay the wool against the garment to be pressed, cover the wool with the wet cotton cloth, and press.

A Small Pressing Board

A small pressing board may be a *sleeve board* or *tailor's press board* which is somewhat larger than the sleeve board but smaller than an ironing board.

A small pressing board should be sturdy and made of well-seasoned wood, lightweight, tapered enough at the narrow end to fit into sleeves. The board should be well-padded and smoothly and tightly covered.



A simple, small pressing board may be made from the 27-inch boards discarded from bolts of material. It is particularly useful for pressing seams, darts, and so on.

A Sleeve Molding Board

A sleeve molding board is used to shape and press sleeves and is particularly helpful if you do a great deal of tailoring.

To make: Use as a pattern the under section of a 2-piece sleeve. Fold the seam allowance under. Lengthen the pattern 4 inches at the bottom edge. Enlarge the sleeve curve about 4 inches, using the upper section of the sleeve as a guide.



Lay the pattern on two pieces of heavy cardboard and cut the cardboard according to the pattern. Pad the double thickness of cardboard on both sides with cotton batting or wool. Pad to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thickness. Cover tightly and smoothly with cotton cloth.

A Pressing Roll

A pressing roll, used in tailoring or dressmaking for pressing seams, may be made of any of the following:

A 13- by 10-inch magazine rolled tightly to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. Cover with tissue paper. Wrap smoothly with several thicknesses of muslin that have been washed free of all starch and dressing. Tie the ends securely with a cord and hem down the raw edges.

A broom handle or a piece of three-cornered molding, cut 18 or 20 inches long. Wrap with muslin and finish off the ends as directed for the magazine roll.

A rolling pin. Remove one handle. Saw off lengthwise about one-third of the round surface to make a flat side. Cover tightly with several thicknesses of padding. Cover with a clean, smooth cloth.



Pressing Pads

Pressing pads are excellent for use in pressing portions of garments hard to get at, odd shaped parts of clothing, curved seams, darts, collars, yokes, tops of sleeves, and children's clothing.

Directions for making patterns and pads follow:

Materials required for three pads: About $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards of heavy unbleached muslin, feed bags, ticking, or other strong fabric, 36 inches wide, pre-shrunk.

1 yard of outing flannel, 36 inches wide for padding

1 bushel of clean, dry sawdust

No. 40 thread

Needles, pins

Sharp shears

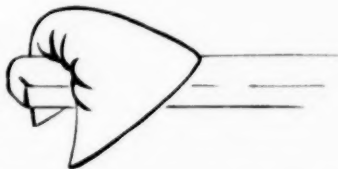
A wooden potato masher or any other implement suitable for pounding in the sawdust

Carbon paper

Tracing wheel

Small semi-circular pad

A small semi-circular pad is used over the end of the ironing board for pressing sleeves. Cut a piece of paper 10 inches square. Fold in half lengthwise and crosswise. Draw curves as shown in illustration, making a circle 10 inches in diameter. Use this paper pattern to cut a pattern from cardboard.



To make: Cut a circle from firm canvas, using the cardboard pattern. Fold the circle in half on the bias.

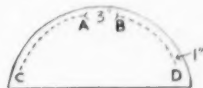
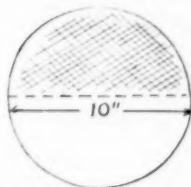
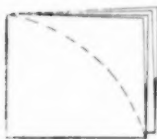
Mark off a 3-inch opening at the top of the curve. Label each end of the opening *A* and *B*.

At each end of the bias fold, measure up 1 inch and place a dot. Label *C* and *D*.

Allowing $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch for seam, stitch from the end of opening (*A*) along one side of the curve to dot (*C*). Fasten threads at each end of stitching.

Stitch from the other end of opening (*B*) along the opposite side of the curve to (*D*).

Stitch on the seam line along the opening to prevent stretching. Do *not* stitch the opening together.



Measure up $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the bias fold and draw a line parallel to the fold. Turn the pad over and on the reverse side draw another parallel line $\frac{1}{2}$ inch up from the bias fold. Crease each of these lines *separately* to form a box pleat at the bottom of the pad. The bias fold should now be at the center of the pleat. At each end of the pleat, stitch from the bias fold diagonally to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the end of the pad, to X to G, X to E, and Y to F. The fourth line, Y to H, does not show in the illustration. These four lines of diagonal stitching close and box the corners of the pad.

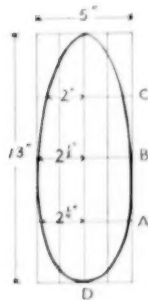


Turn the pad inside out and stuff with clean, dry sawdust. Turn in seam allowances of the opening. Sew the opening together with an overhand stitch.

Sew a strip of elastic to the underside about 1 inch from each corner. This curves the pad to shoulder shape and holds the pad in place over the small end of the ironing board or sleeve board or over the hand during pressing.

Small pad—for seams, sleeves, collars and narrow places

To make the pattern: Cut a piece of paper 13 inches long by 5 inches wide. Fold into fourths both lengthwise and crosswise.



Mark crosswise lines A, B, C.

Mark the lengthwise center line D.

On the crosswise line A measure $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches from the center on each side and place dots.

On the crosswise line C measure 2 inches from the center on each side and place dots.

Draw good curves connecting the dots as shown in the illustration. The ends may be pointed or rounded. Practice drawing the lines until the shape of the pattern is satisfactory.

Make a cardboard pattern using the paper pattern as a guide. Allow $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for seams.

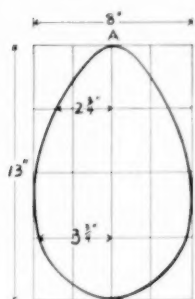
To make the pad: Refer to the directions on page 11.

Medium-sized pad—for shoulders, fronts, backs, and hips

To make the pattern: Cut a piece of paper 13 inches long by 8 inches wide. Fold into fourths both lengthwise and crosswise. Mark the center lengthwise line A. Mark the crosswise lines D, E, F.

On the crosswise line D measure from the center line A $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches on each side and place a dot.

On the crosswise line F measure from the center line A $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches on each side and place a dot.



Draw good curves passing through the dots on lines D and F as shown in the illustration.

The small end of the pad may be rounded or pointed. Practice drawing these lines until the shape of the pattern is satisfactory.

Make a cardboard pattern using the paper pattern as a guide. Use the cardboard pattern for cutting the fabric allowing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for seam.

To make the pad: Refer to the directions at the bottom of this page.

Large pad—for shoulders, curved areas, fronts, backs, and hips

To make the pattern: Cut a piece of paper 15 inches long and 11 inches wide. Fold into three equal parts both lengthwise and crosswise.

Mark the right hand lengthwise fold *A*.

Mark the top crosswise fold *B*.

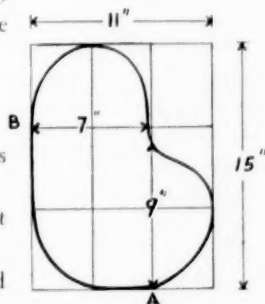
On line *A* measure up from the bottom 9 inches and place a dot.

On line *B* measure across 7 inches from the left edge and place a dot.

Then draw good curves around the bottom and sides and across the top as shown in the illustration. Pass the curved line through the dot made on the crosswise line and connect with the dot made on the lengthwise line. Practice drawing these lines until the shape of the pattern is satisfactory.

Make a cardboard pattern using the paper pattern as a guide. Use the cardboard pattern for cutting the fabric, allowing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for seam.

To make the pad: Refer to the directions in the following paragraphs.

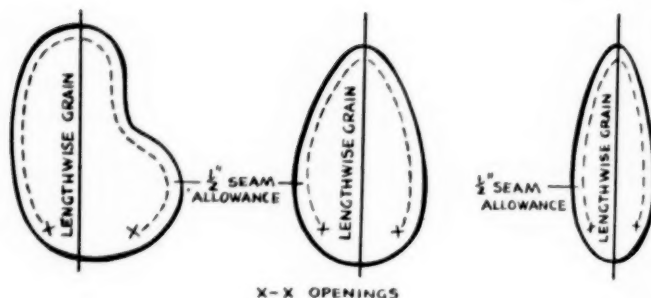


How to make pads

For each pad cut two pieces of outing flannel and four pieces of unbleached muslin, ticking, or other sturdy fabric. Cut on the lengthwise grain of the material, using the same pattern for all pieces and allowing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for a seam on each one. Place carbon paper between the pieces of fabric and with a tracing wheel trace seam lines so that they will be the same on all pieces.

Stitch together two pieces of unbleached muslin or other fabric; stitch on the seam line twice for strength, leaving an opening of about 8 inches at the wider end. Then stitch each piece *separately* along the opening. Stitch on the seam line to prevent stretching and provide a guide for overhanding the opening when the pad has been stuffed.

Turn the pad right side out. Stuff with *clean, dry* sawdust, pounding in



a little at a time with a suitable object. Watch the shape of the pad as you fill and pound. When the pad is filled, it should be smooth, hard, and well-shaped.

Turn in the seams of the opening on the stitched seam line. Using two needles, insert a needle with a double thread (No. 40) at each end of the opening. Using overhand stitch, sew the opening together, working from each end toward the middle. Continue to stuff in the sawdust until the opening has been sewed.

Stitch the outing flannel pieces together, following the above directions, but leave an opening large enough so that the outing flannel cover may be pulled over the stuffed pad with ease. Place the pad in the cover. Turn in seam allowances of the opening and overhand.

Stitch together remaining two pieces of unbleached muslin or other fabric in accordance with the above directions for outing flannel pieces. Use as the outer covering for the pad.

Coverings should be the same size and shape so that they will fit over the pad without puckers or wrinkles. When the pad is finished, it should be hard and smooth.

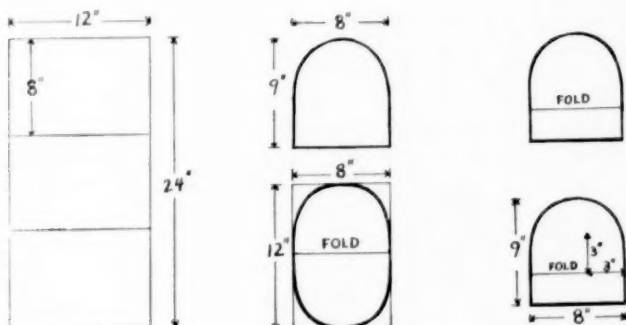
A Pressing Mitt

A pressing mitt is useful in pressing children's clothes, tops of sleeves, and parts of garments difficult to handle on a board. The mitt should be well padded to enable the presser to press garments over the hand. If you are right-handed, make the mitt for your left hand. If you are left-handed, make the mitt for your right hand.



Use heavy muslin, ticking, feed bags, or the like, and cotton or wool batting for filling.

Cut three pieces of heavy muslin, each 8 by 12 inches in size. Round off the edges of two of the pieces, making them 9 inches long and 8 inches



wide. Fold the other 12-inch piece crosswise. Round the edges opposite the fold to match the rounded end of the 9-inch pieces. Mark $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch seam allowances on all pieces.

Lay the folded piece against the right side of one 9-inch section with the rounded ends matching. Measure in from the 9-inch side 3 inches along the fold. Measure 3 inches up from the fold. Draw a line parallel to the 9-inch side, making 3 divisions—a large one for the fingers and a small one for the thumb. If you are right-handed, make the smaller division to the right since you will be using the mitt on your left hand. Reverse the divisions if you are left-handed. Stitch twice through the three thicknesses along the 3-inch line.

Place the two 9- by 8-inch pieces so that right sides are together with the folded piece between them. Stitch twice around, allowing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for seam. Leave the bottom edge open. Turn right side out and fill not too tightly with cotton or wool batting. Turn in the seam allowance at the bottom edge and stitch.

To use, slip the hand inside the mitt and place beneath the part of the garment to be pressed.

Velvet Pressing Boards

Velvet pressing boards are made of wires set in heavy canvas and are used for pressing napped fabrics such as velvet. The fabric is pressed with the right side against the pointed wires to prevent flattening of the nap. When using this type of board be sure also to use a pressing cloth over the fabric.



A substitute for the velvet pressing board may be made by using several layers of heavy Turkish toweling covered with a layer of velveteen, placed

right side up. To press, lay the fabric right side down on the velveteen. Use a damp pressing cloth and press lightly.

Spankers

Spankers are used to give a tailored finish to heavy fabrics or thick seams. They help in setting pleats, folds, collar edges, creases, and seams.

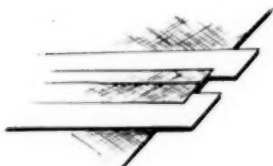


Spankers may be made at home or bought at a tailor's supply house. They should be made of hard wood, 1 to 1½ inches thick, with or without a handle. A good size block of wood is 12 by 3½ inches, shaped into an oval 3½ inches at one end and tapering to 2½ inches at the other. A groove in one side makes for ease in using. All edges should be rounded and all surfaces sand-papered until smooth.

To use: Steam press the garment. Remove pressing cloth. While the garment is still steaming, beat the cloth with the flat side of the spanker until the steam is forced out.

Miscellaneous Equipment

Miscellaneous equipment helpful in pressing includes: A pan of water, a sponge, a whisk broom to brush woolen garments after they have been steam pressed, cardboard, or wrapping paper.



The cardboard or paper may be used to avoid imprinting seams, darts, facings, and pocket flaps on the right side of a garment as it is pressed. Before pressing woolen garments, slip pieces of cardboard or brown paper under the seams, pleats, and so on. Use tissue paper for lightweight fabrics such as rayons and silks.

Cardboard may also be used in pressing neckties. Make a form by laying the tie on a piece of tough cardboard; draw an outline around the narrow and broad ends of the tie from the cross-stitching around the point; cut with a razor blade or sharp shears. To use: Insert the form between the tie and lining with the form next to the front part of the tie. Steam press.



Care of Equipment

Here are a few tips to lengthen the life of pressing equipment:

✓ Protect the *ironing board* when it is not in use with a slipcover of plastic or closely woven fabric.

✓ Keep the surface of an *iron* smooth and clean at all times. To clean, rub the pressing surface over a piece of waxed paper covered with salt, or rub the pressing surface of the iron while warm with beeswax or paraffin wrapped in a clean cloth.

✓ Read and observe manufacturer's directions for using the *steam iron*. Each time you have finished using your iron, drain off all water and leave the cap off to dry out the water compartment.

✓ If the *cord* is detachable, be sure to detach it before putting it away. Hang away from the heat in a place that has no sharp turns to injure the wire. Or coil the cord loosely and keep it in a drawer. Keep the cord dry. Wet cords as well as worn cords may cause a short circuit. Keep cords repaired or buy new ones.

✓ Dry out *pressing cloths* after using. Once a pressing cloth becomes scorched, throw it away. The scorch may stain a delicate fabric. If you buy chemically treated cloths, be sure to read and observe the manufacturer's directions for use and care.

Pressing Hints

✓ Avoid needless pressing by hanging up all garments as soon as they are taken off. Do not jam clothes in your closets but hang clothes loosely to prevent undue wrinkling.

✓ Buy clothing with upkeep in mind. Some fabrics on the market now require little pressing. Many articles of clothing are labeled with manufacturer's directions for cleaning and pressing. Be sure to read and observe directions.

✓ Remember that heat will set some stains. Before pressing a soiled garment, remove all stains, spots, and grime, and brush and air the garment.

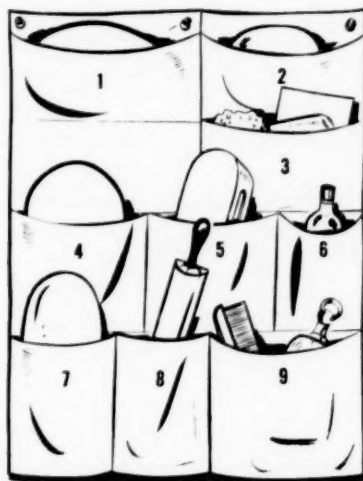
✓ Press with the grain of the fabric. In general, it is safer to press with steam than with dry heat.

✓ If possible, store all your pressing equipment in one place. A wall bag, similar to a shoe bag, is excellent for storing pressing pads.

✓ Be sure to do your pressing where the lighting is good.

Suggested Storage of Equipment

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Pressing pad | 5. Spanker |
| 2. Pressing pad | 6. Bottle of cleaning fluid |
| 3. Pressing cloth, cardboard, sponge | 7. Pressing pad |
| 4. Pressing pad | 8. Pressing roll |
| | 9. Whisk broom, brush |



Cooperative Extension Service, New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of the Acts of Congress May 8, June 30, 1914. M. C. Bond, Director of Extension, Ithaca, New York.